

Amapa, "Rio Tracajutuba Alesquerdo do Rio Araguari, Mun. Amapa" 1.

C. p. pusillus (7). **Brazil**: "Bahia" 2; *Goiás*, 20 km N of Sao Joao de Alianca 2, Rio Thesouras 1, Fazenda 1; "Recife" (=error?) 1.

[MPEG 14972, from Araguaucas, *Goiás*, not seen by the author, is undoubtedly the nominate subspecies.]

C. p. subsp. (2) **Brazil**; *Ceara*. 2.

C. p. xerophilus (2). **Brazil**: *Paraiba*, Santa Luiza 1 (type), "Bahia" 1.

C. p. novaesi (9). **Brazil**: *Maranhao*, Flores 7 (including type); *Piauhy*, Terezina 1, *Estremas* 1.

C. p. saturatus (6). **Brazil**: *Mato Grosso*, Chapada 4, Mutum Cavallo 2.

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The type-locality of *Alethe poliocephala* (Bonaparte)

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Alethe poliocephala was described by Bonaparte (1850: 262, s.n. *Trichophorus poliocephalus*) on the basis of an unrecorded number of specimens in the Rijksmuseum van Natuurlijke Historie, (RNH) Leiden, and with the somewhat indefinite type-locality "ex Afr. occ.". A few years later, more precise localities of the Leiden specimens began to appear in the literature: "Dabocrom: Pel.-Fernando Po: Mus. Lugdun." (Hartlaub 1857: 85). The next development was Reichenow's (1905: 746) definite

statement: "Der Typus im Leydener Museum stammt von Fernando Po", and this has since been generally accepted (Sclater 1930: 478, Bannerman 1936: 419, White 1962: 131, Ripley 1964: 53).

Unfortunately, Reichenow's statement is not entirely accurate. *T. poliocephalus* was not based on a single specimen that could be referred to as "Der Typus", but on 3: two of them were from Dabocrom, Gold Coast (leg. H. S. Pel, 1843), and one marked "Fernando Po" in C. J. Temminck's handwriting, but with neither a collector's name, nor a date. All 3 were formerly mounted and bore in Temminck's hand the identification "*Trichophorus poliocephalus* Tem., nov. sp.". Around 1900, the then curator, O. Finsch, took these birds off their stands and provided them with new labels, on which he copied the information originally written on their socles. He also added the incorrect year to Pel's specimens, 1842 instead of 1843 as it should have been. On the label of the third specimen he placed the name "Fernando Po", Tem., in inverted commas, thus expressing doubt about this provenance.

Recently, looking through the material of *Alethe* in the RNH, I found myself unable to distinguish the specimen supposedly from Fernando Po from 3 specimens (including the 2 other syntypes) from the Gold Coast, and 3 from Liberia.

Authentic specimens from Fernando Po being unavailable in Leiden, I borrowed 2 from the British Museum (Nat. Hist.). The difference between specimens from the Gold Coast (ear-coverts partly brown) and Fernando Po (ear-coverts blackish grey) is rather subtle, but a comparison showed that the Leiden specimen labelled "Fernando Po" is certainly not from that island, and that it belongs to the West African subspecies with brownish ear-coverts. Most likely, it also came from one of the Dutch posts on the Gold Coast, just as the other 2 syntypes did.

Reichenow was apparently the first to recognize 2 subspecies in *A. poliocephala*, and therefore it is logical that he needed a restriction of the type-locality of the nominate race. It is a pity, however, that he did not consult his friend Finsch in Leiden before doing so, as Finsch would certainly have passed on his doubts about the identity of the "Fernando Po" specimen. Under the Code, Reichenow's statement must, regrettably, be accepted as a lectotype-designation (cf. Ride *et al.* 1985: art. 74), although it goes against all recommendations that ought to accompany such an act (particularly 73F and 74E). My personal inclination is to take a less legalistic course, and to reject Reichenow's designation, so that there are 3 syntypes, on the basis of 2 of which the type-locality can be accepted as being Dabocrom. For those who, on formalistic grounds, accept the "Fernando Po" specimen as the lectotype, I propose Dabocrom as its designated type-locality, as there is no chance ever of finding out its exact provenance. The place-name of Dabocrom does not appear on ordinary maps, but is shown by Holthuis (1968: 9).

The consequences for the nomenclature are that the West African subspecies, currently known as *A. p. castanonota* Sharpe, 1871, becomes the nominate one, while the subspecies inhabiting Fernando Po, Cameroon, Gabon, etc., currently regarded as the nominate race, takes the next oldest name, *A. p. compsonota* (Cassin, 1859)—cf. Bates (1911: 623–624).

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Plumage ontogeny and taxonomic status of the Dusky Starfrontlet *Coeligena orina* Wetmore.

by Robert Bleiweiss

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In 1951, the indefatigable collector M. A. Carriker, Jr. obtained a peculiar specimen of the hummingbird genus *Coeligena* at 10,500 ft on the Páramo de Frontino, an isolated páramo at the northern end of the Western Cordillera of Colombia. Wetmore (1953) subsequently described this bird as a new species, *Coeligena orina*, the Dusky Starfrontlet, based principally on its unusual plumage. The holotype was distinguished from its congeners by an iridescent dark green body and the absence of the brightly coloured frontlet and black hood typical of the so-called "Starfrontlet" *Coeligena* hummingbirds (Table 1).

Coeligena orina is still known only from the holotype (USNM 436219), which Wetmore believed was a fully adult male. While examining the holotype, however, I noticed numerous corrugations on the horny sheath of the bill. Bill corrugations in hummingbirds occur only in immatures. Their number decreases with ontogeny and provides a good indicator of relative age (Ortiz-Crespo 1972, Stiles & Wolf 1974, Bleiweiss 1985). Because of its numerous bill corrugations, there is no doubt that the holotype of *C. orina* is an immature bird. Taxonomic evaluation of this